



Just the Basics

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Welcome to the family of Believers

You are at the start of an incredible journey—a connection with God made possible by Jesus Christ. Your relationship with God, like any other, will develop stronger and deeper as you communicate and share experiences. As you get a better understanding of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, your love for God will grow and your faith in Him will grow stronger. You will also begin to understand the significance of Jesus in the tiniest areas of your life. Furthermore, as you observe God's faithfulness in specific situations, particularly those surrendered to Him in prayer, your connection with Him will become stronger.

However, don't fall into the trap of believing that the only advantage of being a Christian is that

you get to go to paradise instead of hell. If you believe this lie, you may believe that you have received everything there is to receive as a Christian and regard the remainder of your life as a mere obligation to repay God for the gift of salvation. This erroneous viewpoint leads to considering the Christian life as an onerous duty, abandoning the "fun" things in life for a mundane lifestyle. But here's the truth: God meant for you to accept Christ not only for the forgiveness of your sins and the assurance of eternal life, but also for a life full of contentment, joy, fulfilment, and purpose in Christ.

God wants you to understand that Christ lives within you and has given you a new life—His life—because of your faith. He longs for you to see Christ's importance in every element of your life. The Father has given an inexhaustible stream of joy, satisfaction, power, and serenity on you via Christ. He has prepared you to be a huge blessing to others around you.

Consider boarding God's raft and allowing Him to steer you down a raging river. You will not be in command of the raft; instead, you must rely on Him to steer it. He will never abandon you, but the trip will be wild, unpredictable, and at times tumultuous. Every individual you meet along the journey will be touched by God's overwhelming love and power. This trip, far from being monotonous and tiresome, promises excitement, adventure, and a profound sense of purpose.

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The Gospel

At the outset of this incredible journey, we come across the most popular Bible verse, John 3:16, which demonstrates the depth of God's love for the world. It exemplifies God, the creator of the cosmos, adoring His creation. Humanity's rebellion against God, on the other hand, led in sin and a broken relationship with Him, resulting in spiritual death.

But here's the good news: God offered His one and only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross out of love. Jesus paid the penalty for our sins via His sacrificial death, giving forgiveness and reconciliation. Jesus is not just God's Son, but also God Himself, a concept that may appear odd at first but will be examined further on our trip.

The whole humanity of Jesus is what gives His

sacrifice its power. He became the perfect sacrifice for human sin as a human person, bridging the gap between God and humanity.

This magnificent gesture of love is available to everyone. God's promise of salvation is without limits or conditions. This salvation, however, is acquired by faith in Jesus. Christianity is a personal relationship with God made possible by Jesus' atoning work on the cross, not just a philosophy or a religious institution. True faith entails trusting Jesus totally, accepting Him for who He claims to be, and embracing His finished work.

We learn on this journey that we cannot earn God's favour via our own efforts. God mercifully offers salvation as a free gift. We accept His forgiveness and restoration humbly, knowing that our faith is solely in Jesus.

As Jesus' disciples, we may die physically, but

we have the promise of eternal life in paradise with Him. Jesus urges us to weigh the expense of following Him carefully. While salvation is free, we must submit to Jesus as our Lord and Master. Following Jesus is a transforming experience in which we aspire to become more like Him.

The basic aspects of the gospel revealed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 closely coincide with the prior teachings. Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians of the gospel he previously preached to them, emphasising the core truths they received and their importance. The Corinthians received the gospel word and held on to it, accepting Jesus Christ's good news and adhering to its precepts.

Paul emphasises Christ's death for our sins as fulfilling the Scriptures and giving the ultimate sacrifice for humanity's redemption. This is fully consistent with the belief that Jesus' death on

the cross paid the cost for our sins and provides forgiveness and redemption.

Furthermore, Jesus' burial and resurrection are central to the gospel message. Christ's burial represents His physical death and the accomplishment of His sacrificial mission, whilst His rising on the third day proves His victory over sin and death, so confirming the power and truth of the gospel.

These aspects of the gospel message in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 are perfectly highlighting the great significance of Jesus' death and resurrection. The gospel summarises the incredible news that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again, providing salvation and eternal life to those who believe in Him. It is a powerful message that provides hope, salvation, and transformation to those who open their hearts to it.

Congratulations on starting this incredible trip! *Your life has been liberated from the hold of sin, and you are now free to love and serve God. As you accept the freedom found in your intimate connection with Him, explore the depths of His love and grace.*

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A new beginning for you!

It was a remarkable encounter with God when you were translated into Christ. You became aware of His presence and His calling on your life during that transformative moment. The decision to turn to God and accept His love and grace resulted in a profound change within you.

You may have felt a sense of separation from God prior to your conversion, a void that needed to be filled. But God, in His infinite love and mercy, reached out to you, drawing you in and revealing the truth of His Gospel. He rescued you from the darkness and welcomed you into the marvellous light of His kingdom through this divine encounter. Your sins have been forgiven, and the bonds of guilt and condemnation have been broken.

God's transformation in your life was even more profound. He created you from nothing, welcomed you into His family, and gave you a share of His eternal inheritance. The Holy Spirit, who dwells within you, has become your constant guide, helper, and assurance of the abundant life and promises that God has in store for you.

Your conversion is based on this personal encounter with God. It represents His unwavering pursuit and desire to have a relationship with you. Your decision to embrace Christianity marks the start of a lifelong journey in which you can experience your Heavenly Father's boundless love and grace.

Allow the Holy Spirit to shape and mould you as you walk this path of faith. Accept the changes in your life that God is bringing about, knowing that living in accordance with His will is the most

fulfilling and purposeful way to live. As you become a transformative presence in the world, reflecting Christ's love, grace, and truth, your transformed life becomes a testimony to God's work within you.

Keep this divine encounter in mind as you continue your faith journey. Allow it to rekindle your passion, deepen your devotion, and reawaken your love for God. Keep God's ongoing relationship with you in mind, and walk in the fullness of His transformative power. Your conversion was not a one-time event, but the beginning of a lifelong journey to know and experience your Heavenly Father's unending love and grace.

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When you Stumble

As you begin your Christian journey, it is critical to recognise that stumbling is not a matter of "if," but rather "when." You underwent a spiritual transformation after accepting Christianity. Your former life was abandoned, and you were raised with Christ to a new way of life. This new life is one of discipleship, in which you walk in Christ's footsteps. This transformation, however, does not occur automatically.

While God places a desire in your heart for this new life, you must still take the next step and do what God has asked of you. Despite our best efforts, we occasionally stumble and fall. We find ourselves doing exactly what God has forbidden us to do. But here's the good news: God is willing to assist us.

As Christians, we acknowledge that God is our

Creator and that He is all-knowing and all-powerful. He decides what is right and wrong, and His decisions are always in our best interests. God has shown us the target, the bull's-eye, along the way. However, there are times when we fall short. This is referred to as "sin." Sin begins with temptation, the enticement that leads us astray. However, temptation is not a sin in and of itself. Our minds are filled with thoughts and enticements. The good news is that we are not forced to succumb to temptation.

God is trustworthy and promises to provide a way for us to resist temptation without sinning. He is on our side, desiring that we master temptation, and He helps us do so. But what should you do if you succumb to temptation? Confess. Recognise that you were wrong, and that God is correct.

In practise, we should make confession a habit. Confession early, often, and completely.

Confession to our fellow Christian brothers and sisters can also be beneficial, as the power of sin is often broken when brought into the light. You can be assured of God's complete forgiveness when you confess, regardless of the gravity or frequency of your wrongdoing. You can experience the freedom that comes from being fully forgiven by God through confession, forgiveness, and cleansing.

Expect to stumble along the way as you walk the Christian path. But keep in mind that God is always there to help you get back on your feet. Admit your flaws, accept His forgiveness, and enjoy the freedom that comes from walking in the light of His grace and mercy.

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Relationship means LISTENING

When you came to faith, you entered into a remarkable relationship with God—a relationship that thrives on communication. Listening and speaking are important aspects of any relationship. As Christ's disciples, we must learn to hear God's voice and communicate with Him through prayer, while also remaining open to the ways in which He communicates with us.

God reveals Himself to us in various ways. His creation is one way He communicates with us. Nature's splendour—beautiful sunsets, towering mountains, the delicate intricacies of a flower—attests to God's majesty, grandeur, and creativity. We can sense God's presence and hear His voice speaking to our hearts as we observe and appreciate the natural world's

wonders.

The Bible, God's written Word, on the other hand, is the most direct and profound way in which He speaks to us. The Scriptures are not just a collection of ancient texts; they are God's inspired message to humanity. As the Bible's writers penned the words of Scripture, the Holy Spirit moved and guided them. As a result, the Bible is the final authority in our lives for truth, wisdom, and guidance.

Recognising the importance of the Bible, we believe it is divinely inspired and completely trustworthy. The Holy Spirit guided the process of compiling the books that make up the Bible, ensuring that God's inspired words were preserved for us. These are God's direct communication to us, not just human opinions or teachings.

We must actively engage with the Bible in order

to truly benefit from it. It is recommended that we read it on a regular basis so that the words of Scripture can enter our hearts and minds. Reading helps us better understand God's character, purposes, and ways. The Bible is more than a historical or religious text; it is God's active and living Word, capable of changing our lives.

Meditation is another effective practise that allows us to internalise and reflect on the truths found in Scripture. It entails meditating on God's Word and allowing its meaning to take root within us. By meditating on Scripture, we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit's illumination and guidance, gaining insights and spiritual nourishment.

It is beneficial to memorise key passages of Scripture. God's Word becomes readily available in our minds and hearts when we memorise it. Scripture memorisation prepares

us for life's challenges by providing a foundation of truth that guides our thoughts, decisions, and actions.

Reading, meditating on, and memorising Scripture, on the other hand, is insufficient. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of obeying God's Word. The goal of Bible study is to understand God's will and align our lives with it, not simply to gain knowledge. Through obedience, we demonstrate our faith in God's wisdom and surrender to His guidance. As we obey His commands and allow it to shape our character and conduct, we experience the transformative power of His Word.

Finally, our relationship with the Bible is about confronting God. We come into contact with the living God through His Word, which speaks to us, teaches us, and reveals His heart to us. Through this ongoing interaction with Scripture, we grow in our knowledge of God, deepen our

faith, and experience the transformative work of the Holy Spirit.

So, let us approach the Bible with reverence, humility, and a genuine desire to hear from God. As we read, meditate, memorise, and obey His Word, it will permeate every aspect of our lives. We will grow in our relationship with God, gain wisdom and understanding, and enjoy the abundant life that comes from walking in His truth.

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Relationship means **SPEAKING**

Communication is essential in any relationship, including your relationship with God. We have the privilege of both listening and speaking in this divine dialogue. Reading the Bible is our primary means of listening to God, and prayer is our primary means of communicating with Him. Prayer is simply the act of conversing with God—a dialogue with the Creator of the universe.

Prayer is not limited to a specific time or location; it can occur anywhere and at any time. God is always ready to hear us, whether our prayers are short or long, a quick utterance or an extended conversation. When Jesus' disciples asked Him how they should pray, He taught them the "Lord's Prayer." Jesus instructs

us in this prayer to address God as "Our Father in heaven." It serves as a reminder that we can approach God with comfort, acknowledging Him as our loving Father while also acknowledging His divine authority and transcendence as the Creator of heaven and earth. Our prayers reflect both an intimate relationship with God and a deep reverence for Him.

The overall structure of the Lord's Prayer directs our approach to God. We begin with God—His character, His desires for us and the world. We pray that His name be honoured and revered, that His kingdom come, and that His will be done. It recognises that God's priorities and purposes should take precedence in our lives. We want people to recognise Him as the holy and perfect God that He is, free of sin. We yearn for His omnipotent rule to be established not just in our own lives, but throughout the entire world. Prayer begins with God at the centre.

Then we bring our personal needs before Him in humble dependence. We request our daily necessities—food, clothing, and shelter—as well as any special requirements. It is critical to remember that God is concerned with every detail of our lives, even the seemingly insignificant ones. We should not be afraid to bring our minor concerns to Him. In addition, we confess our spiritual dependence on Him and seek His forgiveness for our sins. True repentance is demonstrated by our willingness to forgive those who have wronged us. Our ability to forgive others is inextricably linked to our relationship with God. Unforgiveness impedes our own forgiveness and damages our relationship with Him. We also seek God's protection from evil, especially from Satan, the Evil One.

In practise, we should think of prayer as an ongoing dialogue with God. We can pause and respond to what we encounter as we read the

Bible. It is a two-way street of listening, reflecting, and conversing with God. When a verse or thought strikes a chord with us, we can take a moment to express our gratitude or make specific requests in response to what we've read.

Remember that prayer is a two-way conversation with our Heavenly Father. It is a chance to talk with Him, share our hearts, and align our desires with His will. We cultivate a deeper relationship with God and experience the transformative power of His presence in our lives as we engage in this continuous conversation with Him. So, let us accept the invitation to pray, listen, and respond, knowing that God is waiting for our heartfelt words and longs to communicate with us in the most intimate and profound ways.

Learning about God

You entered into a relationship with God when you came to faith, and it is critical that you continue to expand your understanding of who He is. While we can understand some aspects of God's character, we must acknowledge that His ways are beyond our comprehension. God's thoughts and ways are higher and deeper than ours, a concept known as "incomprehensibility."

God's omniscience, which means He has complete knowledge, is one of His attributes. He is aware of every thought that enters your mind before you speak it. His understanding spans the past, present, and future. He comprehends both the movements of distant galaxies and the most minute details, such as the number of hairs on your head. While we will never fully comprehend God's omniscience, we can be thankful that He is all-knowing.

Another attribute is God's omnipresence, which means He is everywhere. His presence is not limited to a single location or space. Rather, everything is contained within Him. While God is distinct from the rest of creation, we live, move, and exist in Him. The fact that God's fullness pervades every corner of creation is truly remarkable. He is not evenly distributed throughout the universe. Although we cannot fully comprehend the scope of God's omnipresence, we can take comfort in knowing that He is always present.

Another attribute that reveals God's unlimited power and sovereignty over all things is His omnipotence. He is free to do whatever He wants, and nothing is beyond His control. While we will never fully comprehend God's omnipotence, we can rest assured that He is all-powerful.

Considering God's awe-inspiring attributes, our natural response is worship. Worship can be defined as our faithful reaction to God's gracious revelation. It all starts with hearing and comprehending who God is and what He has done. We respond to His holiness by acknowledging our own sinfulness. We accept God's forgiving grace when He reveals His mercy. We seek to align ourselves with God's desires when He reveals His will. It is critical to avoid diminishing God, limiting His greatness, or reducing His power in our minds. He has no limitations in any way.

Our reverence and awe grow as we gain a better understanding of God's incomprehensible nature. We acknowledge that God is far beyond our comprehension while also being intimately involved in our lives. Our worship emanates from a place of gratitude and surrender, acknowledging His majesty and responding with wholehearted devotion. As a result, let us

embrace the vastness of God's being, always seeking to discover and worship His infinite attributes.

Who is Jesus?

The question "Who is Jesus?" is central to the early church and Paul's teachings. As Christ's followers, we are more concerned with the person of Jesus Christ than with religion. While there are various answers to this question, such as "a good man," "a teacher," "a prophet," or even "a demon-possessed fanatic," none of them capture the full truth. The reality is that how one answers this question determines everything in life and death.

We see Peter's primary focus in his sermon in Acts 2 on addressing this very question. According to Peter, Jesus was a real human being, but He was also much more. Jesus is addressed as "Lord," which includes not only "sir" or "master," but also His divinity as God Himself. Although the phrase "Son of God" is frequently used to describe Jesus, its true

meaning is easily misunderstood today. It is critical to note that the title "Son of God" does not imply that Jesus was a created being or that he was less than God.

The Jewish people understood the phrase "Son of God" according to their language and culture during Jesus' time, recognising it as a claim to be God. In fact, they attempted to assassinate Jesus for what they saw as "blasphemy." The Bible explicitly declares Jesus to be "God." In fact, Jesus existed "in the beginning with God" and was God Himself. He is known as "the only God." "I and the Father are one," Jesus declared boldly, while Thomas recognised Him as "my Lord and my God." Furthermore, Paul refers to Jesus as "Our great God and Saviour." Although this language recognises the Trinity, distinguishing Jesus as God the Son rather than God the Father, it unequivocally confirms His divinity.

All of this is encapsulated in the concept of "Incarnation." During His incarnation, Jesus became both fully God and fully human. His divine and human natures were not just a show; he truly embodied both. The significance of this truth lies in the fact that Jesus could only die for our sins as both fully God and fully human. Human death was required for human sin, but only God, on the cross, could bear God's wrath and pay the penalty for all human sin. While it may be difficult to grasp, it is a profound reality. To be a Christian, one must believe in both aspects of the incarnation: Jesus' physical embodiment and the confession that Jesus is Lord. The central inquiry that defines our lives as believers is the question, "Who is Jesus?"

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What did Jesus do?

When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." According to John, Jesus was to die on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. Sin against a holy God is a serious offence punishable by death, but God accepts the death of an innocent sacrifice in our place out of mercy. Because only Jesus did something about sin, only the Lamb of God can take away our sin. This is not arrogance or elitism on the part of Christians; it is the truth. Only Jesus, he claimed, provides the way to God through forgiveness, and only he died to make it happen.

Jesus' death was sufficient to atone for the world's sins. This means that all who believe in him can be certain that their sins are forgiven. On the cross, Jesus' final words were, "It is finished." This is Jesus' promise that he did

everything necessary to forgive our sins and give us access to God.

The temple curtain had also been ripped. The "Holy of Holies" was separated from the rest of the temple by a curtain. The "Holy of Holies" was where God's presence once resided. The curtain represents both God's presence among his people and their separation from him. Because of Jesus' work on the cross, that separation is no longer present. The term "atonement" describes what occurred on the cross.

Now, not all people's sins are automatically forgiven, but only those who respond by believing Jesus did, in fact, pay the penalty for our sins. We must respond to the message of atonement with faith. The truth of the "gospel" message, the "good news" of Jesus, is beautifully taught in a church sacrament known as "Communion" (also known as "The Lord's

Supper"). This reminds us that Jesus' body was broken for us, and his blood was shed so that our sins could be forgiven, and we could enter the presence of God.

The miraculous union of God and humanity in Jesus, known as the Incarnation, is central to our faith. Jesus bridged the gap between the divine and the human by taking on human flesh, offering redemption and salvation to all who believe in Him. Jesus' incarnation not only revealed God's love and grace, but also provided a means for humanity and God to reconcile.

The profound truth that Jesus is both fully God and fully human allows us to comprehend the magnitude of His sacrifice on the cross. He willingly took on the sins of the world as the perfect God-man, bearing the weight of our transgressions and offering the ultimate atonement. Jesus' death opened the way for forgiveness, redemption, and eternal life.

Furthermore, Jesus' divinity ensures the effectiveness of His work on the cross. As God's Son, He has the authority and power to defeat sin, death, and the forces of evil. The resurrection is a testament to His victory, proving that He is, in fact, the Lord of all creation. Jesus triumphed over death in His resurrection, ensuring the hope of resurrection for all who believe in Him.

Understanding Jesus' identity shapes our relationship with Him. Recognising Jesus as both fully God and fully human compels us to devote ourselves wholeheartedly to him. We are called to recognise His authority and submit to His will. We embrace His teachings, follow His example, and rely on His guidance through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit by affirming His divinity and humanity.

Finally, the question "Who is Jesus?"

encompasses the essence of our faith and our relationship with God. It is a question that necessitates our thorough investigation and response. We discover a profound truth that transforms our lives and empowers us to live as His disciples as we delve deeper into the mystery of Jesus' nature and character. Accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour gives meaning, hope, and eternal significance to every aspect of our lives.

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Who is the Holy Spirit?

Christians adhere to the profound belief in God's unity, known as monotheism. We are adamant that there is only one God. However, because our faith includes the concept of the Trinity, we are Trinitarians. This means that, while we believe in God's oneness, we also recognise that this one God exists in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit. The complexities of this divine mystery are beyond our comprehension, but we accept it because it is revealed to us in the Bible.

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, plays important roles in the Godhead. His first task is to start the regeneration process in our lives. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our

sinfulness and draws us to God through His conviction. He brings about a transformative change in us through conversion, making us new creations in Christ. Furthermore, He seals us, indicating that we belong to God and are protected from the world's influences.

The Holy Spirit's indwelling in the lives of believers is the second critical task of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes to live within us after we are converted. He assures us of our identity as God's children, leads us in prayer, and assures us of our future resurrection and the many other benefits that come with faith. The Holy Spirit guides us daily by illuminating the truth revealed in the Scriptures and prompting us to live in accordance with God's will. He gives us the ability to not only hear His voice but also to respond obediently to His call.

One of the remarkable works of the Holy Spirit in our lives is empowerment. He bestows

spiritual gifts, or supernatural abilities, on us at the moment of conversion. These abilities enable us to serve and meet the needs of the church community through activities such as teaching, serving, encouraging, and showing mercy. These gifts are intended to bring about transformation in our lives, shaping us to be more like Jesus. The resulting changes, known as the fruits of the Spirit, reflect Christ's personality.

The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, does not impose His empowerment on us against our will. We have the option to resist His leading, but doing so has consequences. It is far more rewarding and fulfilling to follow the Spirit's lead and participate in His work in our lives. Living a life guided and empowered by the Spirit is a thrilling adventure. It starts with admitting our inability to live in accordance with God's desires solely through our own efforts. We experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit's transformative

power as we surrender to and rely on His work within us. Without the Holy Spirit's regeneration and indwelling, our lives would lack the divine empowerment required to carry out God's plan for us.

The Journey with God

We were like infants when we accepted Christianity, just beginning our spiritual journey. However, as with any child, development and maturation are to be expected. Our ultimate goal is to adopt more of Jesus' attitudes and behaviours. This process of transformation is known as sanctification, and it is a journey towards spiritual maturity and holiness.

Our all-powerful God allows difficult circumstances to enter our lives in His infinite wisdom and love. While it may be tempting to wonder if we've done something wrong, we must remember that these difficulties can be part of God's plan to shape and refine us. Our faith is tested and strengthened during these times, and our character is formed.

The key question is how we will deal with

adversity. Christians are frequently tempted to compartmentalise their lives, keeping certain areas separate from God in order to minimise pain. We can only give Him a portion of our time, money, and affections, keeping the rest for ourselves. We must, however, resist these temptations. When Jesus washed away our sins, He became not only our Saviour, but also our Lord, the ultimate authority and ruler over our lives. He longs for our complete surrender. Surrendering to compartmentalisation will harm our relationship with God, but the solution is repentance—acknowledging our wrongdoing, affirming God's righteousness, and seeking His forgiveness.

Failure to repent and continue to live a sinful lifestyle gradually erodes our confidence and assurance as Jesus' followers. Our assurance is dependent on the changes that God brings about in our lives. The Bible contains forewarning passages that warn of the

disastrous consequences for those who claim to be Christians but continue to sin unrepentantly. Our loving Father encourages us to grow and mature in order to become more like His Son, Jesus Christ. This journey of growth and transformation brings immense joy in the Christian life.

We experience the fulfilment and purpose that God intends for us as we embrace the process of sanctification. We discover the abundant life and true joy found in our relationship with God through this journey. Our goal is to increasingly reflect the character and nature of Jesus, just as children gradually grow to resemble their parents. When we first accepted Christianity, we were infants, but now we are called to mature spiritually, becoming more and more like Him with each passing day.

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Sharing is Caring

When Jesus said, "Follow me," He issued a clear call to all people. He not only wants us to personally follow Him, but He also expects us to extend His invitation to others so that they, too, may become His disciples. This is referred to as the Great Commission mandate.

God initiated a profound change within us when we experienced conversion. Individuals who have been transformed are called to live in a way that reflects this transformation. As we do so, our lives will stand out in a world that frequently takes a different path. Some may even regard us as unusual or out of the ordinary.

When people notice the uniqueness of our lives, they are likely to have one of two reactions. They might perceive our lives to be an aroma of

life, something appealing and desirable. Alternatively, our transformed lives may elicit a repulsion similar to the stench of death. Our actions and personality will elicit a variety of reactions from those around us.

If we are perceived as appealing to others, they will eventually want to know why our lives have changed. At this point, we should be ready to respond to the hope that has been placed within us. Sharing the reasons for our faith as well as the message of salvation is an essential part of our response to the Great Commission mandate.

The proclamation of the good news of salvation is at the heart of the Christian faith. As Paul describes it in Ephesians 1:13, it is the very gospel of our salvation. This message is a remarkable and thrilling announcement, the most wonderful and exciting news in the entire world. We have the privilege and responsibility,

as Jesus' followers, to share this life-changing message with others, inviting them to experience the transformative power of God's grace.

In summary, Jesus' invitation to "Follow me" includes both our personal discipleship journey and the mission to extend His invitation to others. We participate in the fulfilment of the Great Commandment to love God and others, as well as the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations, through our transformed lives and proclamation of the gospel. As we embrace these mandates, we become active participants in sharing the world's most beautiful and exciting message—the gospel of salvation.

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Faith, Hope and Love

The true essence of Christian activity is found not in outward appearance but in the state of one's heart. It is not the specific tasks or roles we perform that make us Christian, but the presence of faith, hope, and love within us. This is an important understanding that many people have misunderstood, leading them to believe that only those involved in formal ministry have Christian roles. As a result, people may strive for ministerial positions in order to be seen as "doing ministry," while ignoring the profound impact of their daily service in the world.

The religious nature of the work does not determine its Christian essence; what matters is the inward disposition. A well-known figure, William Tyndale, wisely stated that there is no work better than another to please God. All deeds are equal in pleasing God, whether one

is pouring water, washing dishes, or playing the role of a cobbler or an apostle. The true measure of Christian action is our faith and devotion to it.

Faith, by definition, cannot be motivated by calculations or self-evaluation. Similarly, our eyes are designed to see others rather than ourselves. When we fix our gaze on God, the light of Christ fills our entire being. A God-centred life has the transformative power to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. Genuine Christian action is distinguished by its selfless nature, free of ulterior motives or self-serving agendas. It is not motivated by a transactional mindset that seeks God's approval or personal gain. Rather, with Jesus in our hearts, we love because there is someone in need and we want to bring God glory. Faith is the foundation for all actions that ultimately aim to magnify God's glory.

Whether our tasks involve mundane tasks like dishwashing or more overtly religious activities like preaching, whether we work as salespeople or apostles, the essence remains the same - all actions are unified in their goal of pleasing God. The quality of Christian action is not measured by external indicators of excellence or efficiency, nor by the task's religious nature. It is defined instead by the presence of faith, hope, and love within us. We must prioritise nurturing the heart over engaging in the external trappings of Christian action.

Faith is an essential component of Christian living because it is founded on our trust and belief in God's presence, guidance, and promises. It enables us to act in obedience and pursue God's purposes even when circumstances appear uncertain or difficult. When our actions are rooted in faith, we operate with a sense of dependence on God, acknowledging that we can make a meaningful

impact in the world only through His strength and grace. Faith allows us to see beyond the surface of our actions and see them as opportunities to participate in God's redemptive work.

Hope is another essential component that keeps us going on our Christian journey. It is the confident expectation that God's promises will be kept and that His purposes will be accomplished. We engage in Christian action in the hope that our efforts, no matter how small, will contribute to God's larger plan of healing, restoration, and transformation of individuals and communities. Even in the face of setbacks or discouragement, our hope fuels perseverance because we know God is faithful and His purposes will be realised in the end.

The greatest commandment, love, is at the centre of Christian action. Selfless, sacrificial love reflects God's character and seeks the well-

being of others. Love compels us to act compassionately, serve with humility, and put others' needs ahead of our own. It is motivated by a genuine desire to show God's love to those around us, rather than by personal gain or recognition. Christian action motivated by love is a powerful witness that brings people closer to God's heart.

Faith, hope, and love work together to form the foundation for meaningful Christian action. They elevate our mundane tasks to the level of acts of worship, imbuing them with eternal significance. Whether we are fulfilling minor responsibilities or major roles, the true measure of our Christian action is the depth of our faith, the unwavering hope we have, and the boundless love we extend to others.

It is critical to remember that Christian action does not stop with formal ministry or religious activities. Every aspect of life provides an

opportunity to demonstrate our faith and glorify God. Our faith should pervade every aspect of our lives, whether we are interacting with our families, working in our careers, or participating in our communities. We can fulfil our calling as Christ's followers by embracing the transformative power of faith, hope, and love, leaving a lasting impact on the world around us.

You are part of the Body of Christ

The church, as described in the New Testament, is a living organism comprised of individuals who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ, not just a building or an institution. The apostle Paul frequently employs the metaphor of the body to demonstrate the unity and interconnectedness of Christ's followers. The church functions as the body of Christ, with each member playing a unique role, just as a physical body is made up of various parts that work together harmoniously.

God graciously bestows spiritual gifts on believers through the work of the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit within this body. These gifts are given to strengthen the body of Christ and to equip believers for

service. Each person is uniquely gifted, and their gifts are intended to be used in a way that contributes to the body's overall maturity and growth. Teaching, serving, encouraging, leadership, mercy, and other spiritual gifts are examples. When Christians use their spiritual gifts, the body of Christ functions well and reflects the diversity and unity of its members.

The gathering of believers is essential for the health and growth of the body of Christ. We are instructed in Hebrews 10:25 not to abandon "the assembling of ourselves together." When Christians gather for corporate worship, fellowship, and the study of God's Word, a synergy and spiritual vitality emerges. Our relationships with other Christians are strengthened and nurtured when we actively participate in a local church community, just as logs burn brightly when they are joined together in a fire.

Attending a church that honours Christ and faithfully preaches His Word is critical for our spiritual growth and accountability. We receive biblical teaching, encouragement, and support from our fellow believers when we gather on a regular basis. We worship in a way that honours God and deepens our relationship with Him. We can also use our spiritual gifts to serve others, contributing to the edification and maturation of the body of Christ.

If you do not currently attend a church, you should not wait for an invitation. Take the initiative to find a local church that honours Christ and preaches His Word. Contact the pastor or church leadership in your area and express your desire to connect with the congregation. Plan to attend on a regular basis, to engage in meaningful relationships, and to serve alongside other believers. As a result, you will experience the richness and growth that comes from being an active member of Christ's

body.

Remember that the church is a community to which we belong—a family where we can experience love, support, and spiritual growth. By actively participating in the local church, we fulfil our calling to use our spiritual gifts, contribute to the maturity of the body of Christ, and bear witness to Christ's transformative power in our lives.

Suggestions for Growth

We are free from the constraints of legalistic laws in the realm of God's grace. Instead, we are invited to come to terms with the fact that everything we do is an act of devotion to the Lord. While rules and discipline are important in any relationship, love and faithfulness should be our primary focus. We are encouraged to embark on a transformative journey of spiritual growth and development rather than rigidly following a set of rules or performing service out of obligation. Here are some gentle suggestions, rather than strict laws, to assist us as Christ's followers:

Study the Bible: Regularly study the Bible and meditate. Make time to read the Bible and reflect on its teachings, principles, and messages.

Consider joining a small group or Bible study to learn alongside other believers and participate in meaningful discussions.

Prayer and Communion with God: Establish a regular and meaningful prayer life. Spend time talking with God, expressing your gratitude, praise, and concerns. Seek His direction, wisdom, and strength. Personal prayer and participation in corporate prayer with other believers can help you develop a closer relationship with God.

Worship and Fellowship: Participate in corporate worship on a regular basis, both within the church community and in your personal time with God. Exalt and honour the Lord in your worship, allowing His presence to transform your heart and mind. Seek fellowship and community with other believers, and cultivate relationships that encourage and support your spiritual journey.

Develop Spiritual Disciplines: Incorporate spiritual disciplines that correspond to your personal spiritual journey into your life. Fasting, solitude, silence, journaling, and other practises that enhance self-reflection and deepen your connection with God are examples of these disciplines.

Serve Others: Recognise and apply the spiritual gifts that God has bestowed upon you for the benefit of others. Look for opportunities to serve in your church, community, and beyond. Seek out opportunities to bless those in need by demonstrating Christ's love and compassion through acts of service and kindness.

Cultivate Christlike Virtues: Strive to cultivate virtues that reflect Christ's character in your life, such as love, humility, forgiveness, patience, and integrity. Allow the Holy Spirit to mould your character by aligning your attitudes and

behaviours with the teachings of Jesus.

Be willing to learn and grow in your faith on a continuous basis. Participate in Christian literature, podcasts, sermons, and other resources to better understand God, theology, and Christian living. Attend conferences, seminars, or workshops that offer spiritual enrichment and growth opportunities.

Accountability and Mentoring: Surround yourself with mature believers who can hold you accountable, support you, and mentor you. Find people who can offer you spiritual guidance, wisdom, and encouragement. Participate in discipleship programmes or mentoring relationships that promote spiritual growth and maturity. Develop discernment by following the Holy Spirit's lead and studying God's Word. Examine teachings, messages, and influences to ensure they are biblically sound. Seek wisdom and discernment when making life

decisions and choices.

Embrace a Love Lifestyle: Above all, strive to live out the most important commandments: love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:37-39). Allow love to motivate your actions, relationships, and interactions with others.

Keep in mind that spiritual development is a lifelong journey that necessitates intention, commitment, and reliance on God's grace. Be patient with yourself, rejoice in small victories, and trust the Holy Spirit's transformative work as you become more and more like Christ in your daily life.

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About the Book

Discover the Essence of Christianity with "Just the Basics"

"Just the Basics" will take you on a transforming adventure! This engrossing book reveals the fundamental concepts of Christianity, helping new Christians to a firm foundation of faith.

Discover the amazing narrative of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. Feel the power of His sacrificial death and resurrection as it shapes your spiritual journey.

Discover the beauty of repentance and forgiveness while accepting God's limitless compassion and kindness. Explore the transformational power of Scripture and prayer for direction, strength, and insight.

Discover the significance of baptism as a mark of your devotion to Christ. Participate in fellowship, attend encouraging services, and develop meaningful relationships with other believers.

Set off on a journey of personal development and transformation. "Just the Basics" provides you with crucial information, laying a solid basis for your beliefs.

About the Author

Brendon Naicker attributes his achievements to God's grace. Committed to fulfilling the Great Commission and equipping the Church, his heart is dedicated to equipping ministries and sharing the life-changing impact of the gospel. He firmly believes that effective ministry is fuelled by the Holy Spirit and rooted in a profound understanding of God's Word. For Brendon, studying the Scriptures is not a mere intellectual pursuit, but a pathway to intimately knowing God and making Him known. Driven by a passion to witness transformed lives through the power of the Holy Spirit, he serves with a fervour that is accompanied by tangible manifestations of God's presence. Brendon's purpose is to see lives touched and changed as the Word is preached, and he embraces this mission with unwavering dedication.

